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May 6, 2010

Adam Hall  
Student Government Association  
James Madison University  
Harrisonburg VA, 22801

Dear Mr. Hall:

Thank you for taking the time to read my *Safe Brains: Loaner Helmets for Madison Motorsports* proposal. This proposal provides Madison Motorsports with a new set of loaner helmets so that its members have new, safe equipment to use when participating in motorsport events. This will allow the organization to keep its members safer, and easily get new members and interested students more involved.

As Secretary of the organization, I am passionate about the club and will do anything I can to help the club grow larger and more developed. Madison Motorsports is far from your average student organization or club sport. The club is built around a close-knit group of friends that openly welcomes new members. We host events weekly, everything from cruises on sunny days to wrench days where members help others work on their cars, and trips to one of the racetracks in the area.

Purchasing new helmets for the organization will provide them with the tools to keep newer members, who haven't gotten serious enough about the sport to purchase their own helmet, safer when they participate in events with the organization. Not only will it keep members safer, it will project a positive image of members and students on the community by demonstrating how well organized and professional the club is. If you have any questions about the project, please feel free to contact me at klimchjm@dukes.jmu.edu or (540) 354-4160.

Sincerely,

Joseph Klimchuk

enc.: proposal (9 pages)



**SAFE  
BRAINS:  
LOANER  
HELMETS FOR  
MADISON  
MOTORSPORTS**  
**A PROPOSAL**

**Submitted by:**  
Joseph Klimchuk

**Submitted to:**  
Adam Hall

May 6, 2010

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## Executive Summary

Proper equipment is one of the most important things to have to participate in any form of motorsports. Madison Motorsports, the car enthusiast organization at James Madison University, has several members and guests that like to participate in motorsport events, but don't have a car of their own. These students accompany our members to the racetrack and autocross events and ride along with drivers during the events. These members need proper and new helmets to use, and this project outlines how to obtain them.

The plan includes ordering 5 new full-face helmets for the organization. Then it establishes a system to manage and maintain the helmets, as well as a waiver of liability. The waiver of liability shields Madison Motorsports from any legal action by requiring participants to acknowledge that they are participating in a dangerous event, that they agree the helmet is safe to use, and that they will not sue Madison Motorsports if anything were to happen. The project only costs \$616.15, which is an extremely low price considering everything the plan accomplishes. This project improves the safety practices of the organization, and reflects a positive image of the club, and consequently James Madison University, by demonstrating how well organized and safety conscious the organization is.



## Safe Brains: Loaner Helmets for Madison Motorsports

Imagine this: You're a young college student with a penchant for speed. You're a member of your school's car club on a club excursion to the race track. You've gotten a pit pass, and just climbed into the passenger seat of a purpose-built race car with a professional driver at the wheel. You slide over the roll bar and climb down into the fixed backseat, cinching down on the 6-point racing harness until it nearly takes your breath away. Your driver smiles at his new passenger and hands you a communication device so you can hear each other on the track. Your palms are beginning to sweat a little as you watch the cars at the front of the pit begin to move on track. Your driver eases out the lightweight racing clutch and the car chatters into gear. You're out on the track. Your driver shifts to second, third, fourth, and reaches 120 miles per hour before he begins to brake for the first corner, the harness compressing your torso as the car scrubs off speed. And this is still the warm-up lap. Now think about this, what's around your head?

### An Opportunity for Safer Thrills

Madison Motorsports (MM) is a unique club at JMU that provides its members with opportunities to visit, work and participate in various motorsport events in the region. The situation described above is one that a casual MM member might easily find him or herself in on any given weekend morning. We participate actively in autocross, which is a low speed, low risk car control event friendly to a college student's budget. We also take part in track events, which are more high speed and formal events at of the racetracks in the area.

MM is a diverse club composed of student and alumni of various levels of interest and involvement in motorsports. Some alumni never miss a track weekend and own their own purpose built track cars. Others are casually interested freshman students that don't yet own their own car, and enjoy going to events with the club for the sights and sounds, and to grab "ride-alongs." Most of the events we attend are hosted by either the Sports Car Club of America (SCCA), or the National Auto Sport Association (NASA) which are both "grassroots" type motorsports organizations, and very friendly to newcomers. With a couple signatures on a liability waiver, an MM member can get a pit pass and ask any drivers above a certain level of experience for a ride around a track, and get a free ride more exhilarating than any roller coaster in existence.

Because of the relative ease an amateur enthusiast can strap himself into a race car, the inherent risks might seem less serious than they really are. Likely he doesn't own his own helmet, and has either borrowed one from an older member participating in the event, or has taken one out of the pool of MM loaner helmets, which currently consists of 2 old open face helmets that have been dropped and scratched far too many times to mention, and a full face helmet recently out of date, deemed inappropriate for a driver to use. While MM is a club built around safety, the current helmet situation presents a safety risk and liability issue for the organization. This proposal presents a new approach to how Madison Motorsports creates an environment of safe practices and behavior, provides the organization with an updated, safe and plentiful collection of loaner helmets, and the proper approach for the associated liability issues.



## Building a Safer Organization

This 3 phase plan over a 6 month period provides Madison Motorsports with a new approach to member safety and liability, and provides the organization with a new collection of safe and up to date loaner helmets with a variety of fitting options. The first phase of the plan establishes a new environment of safety within the organization. The second phase prepares a waiver of liability, and protects the organization and its members from legal prosecution. The last phase of the plan supplies the club with a fresh, recently certified set of loaner helmets.

### Phase One: Creating an Environment

The first phase of the plan will be implemented immediately. It consists of a fundamental shift in the clubs approach to safety issues. The entire club is built around a safe approach to motorsports. At the first meeting of every semester, the president will give a brief speech to welcome new members, and in it he cautions that we are dedicated to going “faster, safer” and that we do not tolerate unsafe or reckless behavior from any of our members.

The first phase of the plan builds on this approach to safety, and expands it to include equipment and events. When describing our loaner helmet program, officers will explain that the helmets are intended for new and casually interested members to borrow when they participate in approved events. They will be encouraged to purchase their own helmets that fit properly if they intend to participate frequently in events. This is to encourage an environment of safety when related to equipment within the organization.

### Phase Two: Ordering the Helmets

This is a several step phase that will be implemented after the organization receives the funding. The first step, determines from where the helmets will be ordered. The next three steps handle the actual products, sizes, quantity, and ordering the helmets. The last step establishes how the helmets will be stored, cleaned, inspected and maintained.

#### *Step One: Choosing Where to Order*

The helmets will be ordered from [www.soloperformance.com](http://www.soloperformance.com). This company is an online retailer that caters specifically to autocross participants. They offer helmets, gloves, numbers, event and timing equipment. I have ordered several products from them myself, including a helmet, and the experience was extremely satisfactory. They provided an actual invoice for the purchase, shipping was prompt and the order was correct and in perfect condition. They also offer an excellent return policy. I feel comfortable using them to make an organization purchase.

#### *Step Two: Choosing the Product*

For the organization’s collection of loaner helmets, I suggest the HJC CL-16 M2010 model. The SCCA and NASA require M1995 or SA1995 certifications or newer. The HJC just received an M2010 certification, meaning the helmets can be used validly in the two organizations until 2025.



The HJC CL-16 offers a full face design, which is more comfortable on a road course and also protects the wearer's face in case of an accident. The helmets feature a removable liner so they can be washed and reinstalled, an especially nice feature if the helmet is intended for public use. The helmet has a retail price of \$119.95, which is an extremely competitive price for an entry level helmet. Most other helmets start around \$150 and can easily cost up to \$800 per unit. I also suggest this HJC because I personally own one. I ordered it shortly after they released the M2010 certification edition, and have been thoroughly satisfied with its fit and construction quality.

### ***Step Three: Choosing Quantity and Sizes***

At an average autocross within driving distance of JMU, you can expect to find between 5-20 Madison Motorsports members. Many of them own helmets, but some new drivers, prospective members and guests are usually in attendance as well. In my observations, watching the number of our members and guests that need to borrow a helmet, five loaner helmets will strike the right balance between keeping a reasonable cost and having enough helmets to satisfy demand.

The organization is largely male, and most of our members that own their own helmets wear a large or medium helmet. However, we do have some smaller participants and guests in need of a small size helmet. I suggest purchasing two large, two medium and one small helmet for the clubs loaner collection.

### ***Step Four: Ordering the Helmets***

The helmets will be ordered promptly after the organization receives funding. The order will be shipped to the secretary's apartment (most club merchandise and equipment is stored in officers' homes), and the invoice will be stored by the secretary. The secretary will be responsible for tracking the order and insuring the accuracy of the order when it arrives, and will also manage any returns, if necessary.

### ***Step Five: Managing the Helmets***

Because the secretary will manage the paperwork associated with the helmets (discussed in Phase Three) it is most logical for him to manage the actual helmets as well, so they aren't separated from the paperwork. The secretary will be responsible for storing the helmets, and transporting them to events. If he doesn't plan on attending an event where the helmets will be needed, he will arrange for another officer to step in for him. He will clean the helmets and lining as necessary, and inspect them for scratches or chips that could indicate if a helmet has been dropped.

## **Phase Three: Creating a Waiver of Liability**

This phase consists of creating a waiver of liability and establishes a system to insure they are signed, managed and stored properly.

### ***Step One: Preparing a Waiver***

I will prepare a waiver of liability for the use of the loaner helmets by modifying one of the generic, open source waivers of liability available on the Internet. The waiver will guarantee that the participant understands the type of event they are participating in and that they are using a borrowed loaner helmet. It will require them to agree that the helmet fits safely and securely, they understand how to properly wear the helmet, and that they acknowledge the helmet is properly certified for the



event in which they are wearing it. Then they will agree that they understand the risks in participating in the event, and to release, Madison Motorsports, and its members and officers from any liability should any accident occur. It will also require them to agree to inform a Madison Motorsport officer if the helmet has been dropped while in their possession.

### ***Step Two: Managing the Waivers***

The secretary will be responsible for checking out the helmets at events to participants that need them. The secretary will keep blank forms, and copies of signed waivers with him during the event, and participants that need to borrow them will approach him and ask to check out a helmet. He will check their name to see if they have signed a waiver, and issue them a helmet, or have them sign a waiver before issuing one.

The secretary will be responsible for storing and managing the waivers, and will store them for the entire academic year. At the end of the year, he will discard the waivers and the following fall members will have to resign a waiver. This simplifies the transition process if the current secretary is graduating or leaves his post, and keeps the waiver relatively fresh in members' minds. At the end of an event, the secretary will collect the helmets and make sure they haven't been damaged, and then will store the helmets until the next event.

## **Phase Four: Ensuring Success**

At the officer's meeting the semester following the implementation of the plan, the other officers will take the opportunity to review the success of the project and the performance of the secretary. The other officers will review each of the secretary's responsibilities and will revise the system if necessary.

### ***Step One: Checking Paperwork***

The officers will review the paperwork and make sure that the waivers are stored properly. They will check the helmet sign out sheet against the file of signed waivers and make sure everyone that has used a helmet has filled one out. They will make sure there are plenty of blank waivers on hand, and the waivers are well organized in a safe place, so they can be accessed quickly if necessary.

### ***Step Two: Inspecting Helmets***

The officers will take each helmet out of its storage bag and inspect them for scratches, nicks, cracks or dents that could indicate one has been dropped. They will also check the chin strap for fraying and the condition of the wind visor. This is an opportunity to have a second and third set of eyes make sure the helmets are in satisfactory condition.

### ***Step Three: Repeating the Process***

This self-audit of the helmet management system will occur once a year at the end of the spring semester. Madison Motorsports officers rarely hold their terms for more than a year or two, so the turnover rate is relatively high, and the organization needs to make sure each officer handles the responsibility appropriately. If the secretary has performed poorly, and is still planning on holding that office during the coming year, another officer will be nominated to assume the responsibility.



## Time for Action

Any successful plan must have a schedule so that it can be implemented in an timely and effective manner. This project is roughly structured over a year's time (see Table 1).

Table 1. Title- Timeline

| Timeline                                    |                                  |
|---|----------------------------------|
| Submit Proposal                             | May 6, 2010                      |
| Review for Approval                         | August 20-October 1, 2010        |
| Phase One: Creating an Environment          | Beginning May 6, 2010            |
| Phase Two: Ordering the Helmets             | October 1, 2010-October 15, 2010 |
| Phase Three: Creating a Waiver of Liability | October 15- December 15, 2010    |
| Phase Four: Insuring Success                | April 28-May 8, 2011             |

The Proposal will be submitted at the end of the spring 2010 semester, and will be reviewed during the first half of the fall 2010 semester. The first phase of the plan however is a change in rhetoric and behavior of the officers, and will be implemented immediately. This phase is a permanent shift, and therefore has no ending date. The second and third phases do rely on the approval stage, and will begin in early October. The second half of the semester allows the Secretary to create the waiver of liability and the loaner helmet program will begin with the start of the motorsport season in March of 2011, and the evaluation period will occur at the end of the semester to make sure the helmets and waivers and being managed properly.

## The Cost of Safety

The total cost of this project is extremely reasonable given what it accomplishes. The only cost associated with the entire plan is the actual purchase of the helmets; the other phases will be completed by members and officers, free of charge (see Table 2, Page 6).



Table 2. Title- Expense Breakdown

| Expense Breakdown      |          |               |                 |
|------------------------|----------|---------------|-----------------|
| Helmet Expenses        | Quantity | Cost Per Item | Cost            |
| Small HJC CL-16        | 1        | \$119.95      | \$119.95        |
| Medium HJC CL-16       | 2        | 119.25        | 238.50          |
| Large HJC CL-16        | 2        | 119.25        | 238.50          |
| <b>Helmet Subtotal</b> |          |               | <b>\$599.75</b> |

  

| Shipping Expenses   | Quantity | Cost Per Item | Cost  |
|---------------------|----------|---------------|-------|
| UPS Ground Shipping | N/A      | 16.40         | 16.40 |

  

| Waiver Expenses        | Quantity | Cost Per Item | Cost          |
|------------------------|----------|---------------|---------------|
| Waiver Preparation     | N/A      | 0.00          | 0.00          |
| Waiver Printing        | N/A      | 0.00          | 0.00          |
| <b>Waiver Subtotal</b> |          |               | <b>\$0.00</b> |

  

|                   |  |  |                 |
|-------------------|--|--|-----------------|
| <b>Total Cost</b> |  |  | <b>\$616.15</b> |
|-------------------|--|--|-----------------|

### Expense Analysis

As previously stated, the only concrete costs associated with the entire plan are the purchasing and shipping costs of the helmets. Each helmet has a retail price of \$119.95, and the entire collection costs \$599.75. The standard rate shipping is fairly reasonable considering the size of the shipment, quoted by the United Packaging Service to be \$16.40.

The third phase of the plan produces a waiver of liability for members wishing to borrow the helmets to sign. Because the waiver will be written by a Madison Motorsports officer free of charge. The waivers can be copied free of charge as well, because like all student organizations, Madison Motorsports has access to free printing through the school, so there is absolutely no cost associated with this phase.

### A Future with Safer Brains

In summary, providing Madison Motorsports with a new set of loaner helmets will allow the organization to continue participating in exciting motorsport events with the safest and most current equipment possible. It will demonstrate to the community that MM members and JMU students are professional, well organized, responsible, and concerned about their safety. The total cost of the entire project is \$616.15, which is extremely reasonable, considering everything the project accomplishes. Thank you for reviewing this proposal, if you have any additional questions, please feel free to contact me at klimchjm@dukes.jmu.edu or (540) 354-4160.

